

AMBS alumni news

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2 News of AMBS alumni in Ethiopia
- 3 Alumni news notes
AMBS notes
- 4 Celebrating accomplishments
Announcements for fall and winter

Two alumni named in this issue are being recognized for their ministry and service work since their graduation. "Alumni Ministry and Service Recognition" is the new name for "alumni award" of former years. The alumni executive committee hopes to move from language of competition/winner and to focus on excellence and faithfulness in a variety of ministries.

Each year alumni are invited to nominate their peers. From this list of graduates, the committee selects several who represent diversity in gender, age, nationality, context, faith tradition. These persons will be invited to campus next fall to speak in person—if possible—and to help students imagine new ways to participate in Jesus' saving and liberating work.

—Rhoda Schrag, Alumni Association president

Editor's note: We are unable to report on a nominee to the Alumni Association Executive Committee in this issue as the Constitution indicates. In the fall issue of *AMBS Alumni News* we will nominate a new member-at-large to fill the vacancy when Gerald Good's term ends.

2013 Alumni Recognition

Ministries of peace

Kathy Bergen of Ramallah in Israel-Palestine and Marty Troyer of Houston, Texas, will share learnings from their ministries as this year's selections for the Alumni Recognition. Both are involved in ministries of peace, but in very different ways.

Kathy Bergen, MDiv 1982

"In the Middle East, when working for peace with justice, one cannot work on the side of Israelis or Palestinians—one must work on the side of justice—with all Palestinians and Israelis who want a just peace for all."

This declaration by Kathy Bergen sums up more than 30 years of her ministry in and for Israel-Palestine. Just after she graduated from AMBS, she went with Millard Lind, then professor of Old Testament, and other students to Jerusalem for a semester. While there, Kathy accepted an assignment with Mennonite Central Committee that involved her in local Palestinian Christian and Muslim communities and the Israeli peace movement for eight years. Then Kathy moved to Geneva, Switzerland, and directed the International Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine. From 1991 to 2006, she was based in Philadelphia, Pa., working as national coordinator of the Middle East Program of the Peacebuilding Unit for the American Friends Service Committee.

In 2006, the Friends International Center in Ramallah asked Kathy to come to Ramallah in Israel-Palestine to develop a program with the Ramallah Friends Meeting. This summer, Kathy anticipates retiring and returning to Canada.

With the overriding commitment to working for peace and justice, Kathy's story involves networking among an extensive list of organizations. She taught courses at the Bethlehem Bible College and supported the establishment of the Israeli-



Palestinian Fellowship of Reconciliation. During her MCC assignment, she also worked as public relations staff for the Palestine Human Rights Information Center. She was part of the effort that became Sabeel, the Palestinian Liberation Theology Center, based in East Jerusalem. Kathy has written and published many articles and contributed to several books. She is coauthor, with Dr. David Neuhaus, of the book, *Justice and the Intifada* (Friendship Press 1991).

Marty Troyer, MDiv 2008

Marty Troyer has been pastor of the Houston (Texas) Mennonite Church: The Church of the Sermon on the Mount since 2008. He says he loves preaching, encouraging people to become what they were created to be, and dreaming about what Houston could look like "if we truly worked to make 'God's kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven.'"

Marty's ministries of working for peace and writing began early. As a student at



Wheaton College, he started the first peace club, Plowshares. Before coming to AMBS, Marty was associate pastor in two congregations: Lebanon (Ore.) Mennonite Church and Hesston (Kan.) Mennonite Church. He focused on

faith formation and spiritual disciplines, regularly creating devotional books and while in Hesston he started his first blog.

At Houston Mennonite Church, the focus on faith formation and spiritual disciplines led Marty into a local missional



Kelbessa Muleta Demena (MDiv 2012) returned to campus for a brief visit in April, along with Kiros Teka Haddis, president of Meserete Kristos College in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

News of AMBS alumni in Ethiopia

Kelbessa Muleta Demena (MDiv 2012) and other representatives of the Meserete Kristos Church in Ethiopia visited AMBS on April 30. They shared information about the rapidly growing church in Ethiopia and the challenge to provide leadership that helps believers mature in faith.

"I am working with all regions (73), each with a minimum of ten local churches," Kelbessa explained. He does short-term training and seminars for elders, pastors and teachers. Currently this involves informal training but he would like to teach at the college as well.

Kelbessa also gave updates on other recent AMBS graduates in Ethiopia:

Mulugeta Zewdie (MAPS 2002) was general secretary of the Meserete Kristos Church and now works with the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Association as peace

department director. In this role, he has worked with the government to develop peace curriculum which encourages work with Muslims and other groups. "In terms of population, the Meserete Kristos Church is a minority, but the impact of the teaching of the church is huge," Kelbessa said.

Girma Teklu (MATS 2000) is a New Testament professor at the College.

Getaneh Ayele (MDiv 2006) works part time with the college and part time with local churches as a pastor.

Teku Kebede (MATS 2012) is teaching and working toward a Ph.D. He was the head of the education department for the church.

Getu Haile Abiche (MATS 2013) is coordinator of one of the regions of the Meserete Kristos Church. •

Alumni Recognition (continued from page 1)

faith formation community called FaithWalking, and he is now a trained group facilitator.

Marty carries on a writing ministry, including the launch two years ago of "The Peace Pastor" blog for *The Houston Chronicle* (blog.chron.com/thepeacepastor/), "an enormous platform for an Anabaptist peace witness." However, Marty emphasizes, the story is not in what is written or the number of readers (one post garnered 17,000), but in the face-to-face relationships the blog has fostered. These are "relationships that are multi-faith, ecumenical, connecting evangelical Christians with justice-groups."

Marty works closely with the Fe y Justicia Center, addressing issues of wage theft and labor rights, and with the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty. He also is on the board of Healing the Brokenness, a lecture-based program seeking to bring local practitioners together to enhance a shared vision for overcoming racial, economic and systemic brokenness in the community.

Marty and Hannah, his wife, have three children: Malakai (5), Clara (2), and Ruby, born in March.

Kathy Bergen and Marty Troyer will visit campus this fall to share with the seminary community what they have learned in their ministries. Watch for announcements at www.ambs.edu and for recordings of presentations on iTunes U. •

Keep in touch with AMBS

Keep up with AMBS on Facebook:
www.Facebook.com/followAMBS
(Click "Like" next to our name so you can get regular updates.)

Subscribe to the AMBS calendar to get notices of new events:
www.ambs.edu/news-events/calendar/10147

Download guest lectures on iTunes U:
www.ambs.edu/news-events/iTunesU.cfm

Alumni giving essential to AMBS

Twelve percent of total giving to the annual fund this fiscal year came from alumni, Missy Kauffman Schrock, director of development reports.

Gifts from 460 alumni households added up to \$161,669. The April 22–24 phonathon attempted to reach 290 alumni, and 39 gifts arrived as a result of the phonathon.

With only about one in eight alumni giving this year, Missy extends a challenge: "We had 100% of the employees and 100% of the board members giving to AMBS this year. It would be wonderful to see the percentage of alumni who give jump higher in the new year."

Missy continues, "The number of alumni who give is very important to the seminary." First, it motivates others to

give, knowing that those who studied here value it enough to send contributions. Second, it helps the seminary secure grants when other organizations see strong support from alumni.

A new President's Circle, the Fidelity Circle, encourages regular giving—monthly or quarterly—by credit card or automatic bank withdrawal. People who sign up for this Circle receive all communication from AMBS by email, thus saving the cost of paper and postage.

Gifts also can be made online at any time: www.ambs.edu/giving/give-online.cfm. Or they can be sent by mail to the address in the back page. •

ALUMNI NEWS NOTES

Titus Oyeyemi (MAPS 2004) has written and published *Equipping the New African Peacebuilder: A Peacebuilder's Curriculum* (2012). In 2003 he founded African Projects for Peace and Love Initiatives in USA; in 2005 he established African Foundation for Peace and Love Initiatives in Nigeria. Titus earned his doctorate in Organizational Leadership in 2012 from the University of Phoenix. The book presents a multi-faceted peace curriculum, analyzing the history of Africa. It is available from Evangel Press.

Jill Schreiber (former student) earned a Ph.D. in social work from the University of Illinois. Her dissertation is "Religious Socialization of Maltreated Youth and the Impact of Religiosity on Their Delinquency." She will begin as assistant professor of social work at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville.

Leo Driedger (BD 1957) continues to work at the University of Manitoba. This year he presented two papers on human rights, one at Oxford University (published in their *Public Forum Journal*),

and another at the University of Winnipeg (published in the *Journal of Mennonite Studies*). The *Journal of Ethnic Studies* published his paper on multiculturalism.

Glenn Brubacher (MDiv 1972) and Anna Mary Brubacher from Kitchener, Ont., have volunteered at AMBS for several weeks every year since 2006. This year, Glenn and fellow volunteer Alvin Martin built a new storage shed for the campus garden.

Chris Marshall (MAPS 1996) introduced his newest book, *Compassionate Justice: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue with Two Gospel Parables on Law, Crime, and Restorative Justice*, at AMBS on March 12. Chris, who also holds a Ph.D., is Head of the School of Art History, Classics and Religious Studies at Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand. Read more at www.ambs.edu, in *News and Events*.

Gary Yamasaki (MDiv 1988) has recently published *Perspective Criticism: Point of View and Evaluative Guidance in Biblical Narrative* (Wipf & Stock, 2012) which sets

out a new approach he has developed for interpreting the stories of the Bible. He has also established the Perspective Criticism website (<http://perspectivecriticism.com>) to function as a site for collaborative scholarship on this interpretive methodology.

Alissa Bender (MDiv 2007) was ordained April 28 at Hamilton (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

James E. Horsch (BD 1966), John D. Rempel (MDiv 1974 and former faculty), and Eldon D. Nafziger edited *According to the Grace Given to Her: The Ministry of Emma Sommers Richards*, published by the Institute of Mennonite Studies. See more in *Research and Publishing* at www.ambs.edu.

Deaths
Harold T. North (MDiv 1988), Rome City, Ind., on Feb. 19, 2013. Harold was a pastor and teacher, including pastoring Soloman Creek and Rome City United Methodist Churches.

Barbara Prasse (MDiv 1970), the first woman to receive an MDiv from AMBS,

died in Bloomfield, Conn., May 5, at age 91. Barbara was one of the first women ordained in the Presbyterian Church (US). She served several pastorates and as dean of students at McCormick Theological Seminary.

Elmer R. Friesen, Portland Ore., on Feb. 20, 2013. Elmer was a pastor and served as conference minister for several districts of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Ray Keim (BD), Goshen, Ind., on April 20, 2013. Ray was a pastor and therapist and served as a pastoral counselor. He and Clara, his wife, led many marriage enrichment retreats.

Leland Harder (BD 1952, faculty 1958–1983) died March 21 in North Newton, Kan. Leland was a scholar of both Anabaptist history and Anabaptists of the 20th century. He participated in several significant sociological studies of North American Mennonites in addition to being a professor and pastor. Visit www.ambs.edu and select *News and Events* to find a fuller story of his contributions to the church and AMBS. ●

AMBS NOTES

Faculty opening

AMBS is seeking a **professor of peace studies and Christian social ethics** to teach in areas such as environment, power and anti-oppression analysis, economics, war and violence, and conflict mediation. Qualifications include passion for the church as central to peace and justice in the gospel. Review of applications begins September 15. See more in *About/Job openings* at www.ambs.edu.

Read about graduates

The summer issue of *AMBS Window*, now in full color,

reports what new graduates are doing next. Read it online at www.ambs.edu/news-events/AMBS-Window.cfm

Interim director for AMBS-Great Plains

Dorothy Nickel Friesen (former assistant dean) is interim director of AMBS-Great Plains for the next year. **Lois Barrett (MDiv 1983)**, who has been director, will be on sabbatical fall semester and then will increase her teaching load. Elizabeth Raid's assignment as admissions counselor with AMBS-Great Plains has ended. ●



Quinton Dixie, Ph.D., presented the Theological Lectureship in March. Listen to recordings of his presentations exploring how stories and memories have a significant role in shaping our identity and faith, even when they are not historically accurate. Visit www.ambs.edu for a link to AMBS's iTunes U channel.

Celebrating accomplishments

This year, AMBS has had so much to celebrate that we finally threw a party. On April 26, we celebrated with the board of directors a long list of accomplishments in just one year:

- New name
- New MDiv degree with both on-campus and distance options
- Renewed approval to educate United Methodist pastors for ordination
- Launch of Anabaptist Short Courses with full (or more than full) enrollment in the first two courses
- Four faculty members completing doctoral degrees
- Nineteen graduates
- Board and faculty responding to the challenge with 100% participation in contributions to AMBS this year
- Board reappointment of Rebecca Slough as academic dean and Jewel Gingerich Longenecker as associate dean for leadership education.

Read details at www.ambs.edu, in the *News and Events* section. ●



Rebecca Slough (MDiv 1982), academic dean, and Safwat Marzouk, assistant professor of Old Testament (holding Julian), confer during an April 26 celebration. Safwat and three other professors were honored for completing doctoral degrees in the previous year: Allan Rudy-Froese (MDiv 1992), Rachel Miller Jacobs (MDiv 2000) and Andy Brubacher Kaethler.



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A seminary of
Mennonite Church USA and
Mennonite Church Canada

Announcements for fall and winter

New MDiv to launch in August

AMBS has received full accreditation approval for the new 80-hour MDiv with two study options: **MDiv Connect** for students at a distance and **MDiv Campus** for students who join the learning community in Elkhart.

Anabaptist Short Courses

Anabaptist Short Courses are six-week, non-credit courses, taught at a master's level for people who want to engage issues of Anabaptism but don't need credit. Two classes are offered this fall:

- Engaging John Howard Yoder's *Theology Today* with Gayle Gerber Koontz;
- Exploring Peace and Justice in the Bible with Perry Yoder.

For details, visit www.ambs.edu/churchleadershipcenter

Pastors Week

Pastors Week, Jan. 27–31, will feature AMBS's newest faculty members: **Safwat Marzouk, Allan Rudy-Froese, Rachel Miller Jacobs, Andy Brubacher Kaethler and Jamie Pitts**. They will explore how focusing on Jesus—even with

different views—can help us find unity in a divisive culture. Beyond that, diverse points of view can make the picture clearer. Learn more about Pastors Week with the theme "Help me see Jesus! Help me see, Jesus!" at www.ambs.edu/pastorsweek.

Webinars

- Planting Peace Churches: The Heart of God's Shalom Strategy, Sept. 10, 2:00–3:30 p.m.
- Congregational Finances and the Role of the Pastor, Oct. 3, 10:00–11:30 a.m.
- Advent Planning, Oct. 17, 7:30–8:45 p.m.
- Going All the Way: Love, Sex and Baptism, November 13, 2:00–3:30 p.m.

Workshops

- Advent Planner, Sept. 20
- Lent Planner, Jan. 17

Open House

Encourage someone you know with gifts for ministry to join in AMBS's fall Open House, Friday, Nov. 15. Share this link for information and registration: www.ambs.edu/visitAMBS ●